

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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S E C R E T BELIZE 556

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, BH, UK, GT
SUBJECT: GOVERNOR COMMENTS ON NEW YORK TALKS

REF: A) BELIZE 546 B) BELIZE 522

1. I SPENT ABOUT AN HOUR AND HALF WITH GOVERNOR MCENTEE THIS MORNING. HE WAS IN BUOYANT MOOD, OBVIOUSLY SHARING SAME FEELING OF ACCOMPLISHMENT AND FORWARD MOTION NOTED BY UDP LEADER LINDO LAST NIGHT. HE GAVE COPY OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WHICH HAD BEEN SIGNED BY PRICE AND LINDO IN NEW YORK AND WHICH HAD BEEN PUBLISHED BY UDP. COPY POUCHED, ALONG WITH COPY OF NEWS RELEASE.

2. MCENTEE STARTED OFF BY SAYING HMG REALIZED SITUATION HERE HAD COME TO A FULL STOP AND WAS A LOG JAM. SIGHT HAD BEEN LOST OF ULTIMATE GOALS, ESPECIALLY ON PART OF POLITICAL PARTIES. THE MAIN ITEM, HE SAID, WAS RESOLUTION OF ANGLO-Guatemalan ISSUE; INDEPENDENCE QUESTION COULD THEN BE TACKLED AT LATER DATE.

3. HE FELT ELEVATION OF DISPUTE ABOVE PARTY POLITICS WAS A MAJOR SUCCESS. A COMMITTEE MADE UP OF BOTH SIDES OF THE
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FLOOR HAS BEEN FORMED WHICH WILL SERVE AS A CENTRAL FOCUS FOR DEVELOPMENTS AND WILL SERVE TO KEEP BOTH PARTIES INFORMED OF DEVELOPMENTS. GOV. FELT ANOTHER MAJOR STEP FORWARD WAS REMOVAL OF VEIL OF SECRECY WHICH HAS SURROUNDED SO MUCH OF THE NEGOTIATIONS SO FAR. REGARDING REFERENDUM, HE NOTED THAT ONLY ANGLO-Guatemalan ISSUE WOULD BE SUBMITTED; THIS IS IN CONFLICT, OR APPEARS TO CONFLICT WITH LINDO'S BELIEF BOTH

INDEPENDENCE AND DISPUTE WOULD BE PUT TO PEOPLE.

4. THE REFERENCE PARAGRAPH 1. A REF B TO "PREVIOUS PROPOSALS" DOES REFER TO A DRAFT TREATY WHICH MCENTEE CLAIMED, HAS BOTH GOOD AND BAD POINTS. HE FELT THE GOOD MIGHT BE REWORKED AS NEEDED AND THE BAD REJECTED.

5. PARA 1. B OF REF B ON THE ATTENDANCE OF PARTY REPRESENTATIVES AT TALKS WAS EAGERLY SOUGHT BY BOTH UDP AND PUP AND THE FOLLOW ON LINE REFERRING TO THE "RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT" WAS PUT IN AS A RECOGNITION THAT HMG WAS STILL THE MAJOR PLAYER AND TO REINFORCE THAT POINT. MCENTEE FEELS THIS WAS ALSO AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE MEMORANDUM.

6. PARAS 1. C -- "A SOLUTION TO THE A-G DISPUTE IS HIGHLY DESIRABLE FOR PROGRESS" REFERS TO THE TIMING OF NATIONAL ELECTIONS AND IT IS HOPED WILL TAKE SOME OF THE HEAT OFF FOR A RUSH TO ELECTIONS FOLLOWING AN AGREEMENT ON THE DISPUTE.

7. OTHER OBSERVATIONS PUT FORTH BY MCENTEE ARE THAT THE ATMOSPHERE WAS VERY GOOD IN NEW YORK AND THAT BOTH LEADERS WERE IN A CONSTRUCTIVE FRAME OF MIND. HE IS ALSO PLEASED THAT LINDO HAS "BEHAVED WELL" SINCE HIS RETURN AND DID NOT RUN OFF HIS MOUTH TOO MUCH AT LAST NIGHT'S RALLY. HE IS CONFIDENT PRICES WILL BEHAVE EQUALLY WELL TONIGHT.

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8. SUBSTANTIALLY MORE IMPORTANT, HOWEVER, IT SEEMS BRITISH WERE IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH GUATEMALANS BEFORE AND DURING THE NEW YORK SESSION. MCENTEE STATES RESPONSE FROM GUATEMALA CITY HAS BEEN ENCOURAGING IN THAT GOG (PRESIDENT ELECT) SEEMS TO BE UNDERSTANDING OF ACTIONS TAKEN. MCENTEE ALSO TOLD ME "COLLATERAL" REPORTS CONFIRM THIS. MCENTEE SAID THAT ROWLANDS WILL BE MEETING WITH MOLINA (ALREADY REPORTED BY GUATEMALA CITY) BUT WOULD NOT DIVULGE TIME OR VENUE. HE SAID THIS MEETING WAS A "SORT OF TIDYING UP" OPERATION AND WOULD, HE FELT SURE, BE ATTENDED BY A REPRESENTATIVE OF NEW GOVERNMENT. FINALLY, GOVERNOR SAID MULTI-LATERAL FORCE WAS DEAD ISSUE; A STATEMENT MADE BY LINDO LAST NIGHT.

9. ONE CAN ONLY HOPE THAT GOOD WILL AND OPTIMISM GENERATED BY THESE TALKS (WHICH DO INDEED APPEAR TO HAVE COME OFF WELL AND TO HAVE MAJOR EFFORT FROM ALL PARTIES INVOLVED) WILL NOT FADE AWAY IN FACE OF COMPLEXITIES OF SITUATION WHICH HAVE NOT CHANGED.

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